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Must Remain in
Transcription Room

M 1812

Wednesday, April 1, 1970

N.Y.C. - III

MR. NYLAND: So, another Wednesday. We're living in a very difficult period you know. We've talked about that already for a long time. I don't think it is getting worse, but I think it is affecting us more. I think the conditions as they are start to affect this particular part of the world with which we are familar a little bit more deeper. It is because it prolongs so much and there is gradually a certain desire that all this kind of chaotic condition should change so that you can live again a little bit more peacefully. There's no objection that it affects one. That is apparently the condition in which we, at the present time, must live. It doesn't help to revolt against it because the currents that are in operation are much and much stronger than we can individually counteract. Of course, there is only one way out for oneself: that is to find an equilibrium within oneself. Because what is taking place is the Earth's and for that matter every kind of crystallization in the universe is subject to two forces which we simply call

"involution" and "evolution." And the effect which by being affected by one or the other force that the two forces are separating more and more, that there is still an influence from one and the other on people as they are.

But the involutionary force goes, you might say, a little faster. And the evolution has to be faster but isn't fast enough as yet. And that mankind on Earth is simply subject to that kind of a separation, the result is that in general many people will feel lost, not knowing what to do because they have no way of knowing and they have not developed sufficiently. So they are at a loss regarding themselves and the separation of the two forces will cause humanity to come very close to a state of exploding. That perhaps may be the result. There is no particular reason to cry, "Wolf," before the wolf appears.

But there are definite indications that it is not going to let up, and whichever way one now wants to explain it, that Mother Nature is dissatisfied with the civilization which at the present time exists on the Earth, and that by means of quick communication this kind of civilization is now spreading much further over the world and much faster than, let's say, fifty years ago, it does not change the fact that people are constantly under that influence and will feel the influence more because have lost an aim for themselves. Whatever then becomes topsy-turvy and that everything is as good as everything else, and there is no particular leadership and that much of that what is happening simply is happening because one has lost the key to the particular civilization in which we happen to live, and no one and no group of men have come forward as yet

with a definite solution so that every person could agree with it.

It is, you might say, as if the time at present is right for a messenger from above. But there are too many messengers and even if they have the intentions and a certain genuineness, they are not deep enough to affect the quantity of mankind which ought to be affected. In itself the problem could be solved by a small quantity of people united in a particular kind of an aim. And that then as a result of it, the rest would follow. Perhaps twenty percent of the total population, if they could unite on one particular aim and all could agree, they would be able to set the world right, you might say, on its feet. But now it is lost in space and when that happens and there is no one like a Messiah coming down to Earth, and assuming that God is still sufficiently interested in mankind because we as an organic kingdom still represent life -- but when nothing of that kind is forthcoming, or if those who have tried were not strong enough and that now the process of dilution of that what were essential principles has gone on and has gone on too far so that whatever started out as a good principle has become too much diluted, there is no other way for a well thinking man than only to find out what is within his world a replica of the outside world, and then to see to what extent it is possible for him to develop over which he then can have a control, since he cannot control the outside world anymore. One can say one could wait for some kind of a messenger to come, but it is so uncertain when. And in the meantime, what will one do? Just hoping for the best and sitting quietly by and being devoured and in time being destroyed? The lesson that one can draw from this kind of a condition, if one sees it well enough, is not to sit down simply and to rebel, or to take it as it is, or to even to try to explain it away, because all of that doesn't

engage a man in the proper place where he should live. He can give all kind of reasons and rationalizations in his mind why the conditions are the way they are, but for himself there is no satisfaction at all because he keeps on being affected by the outside world and the way it is. And we have to live with strikes and with dishonesty and with bombings and all the rest, with a tremendous amount of suffering and war and constantly seeing how life is destroyed. And when one listens to the news, and you get your fill of everything even including TV, when you hear then of an earthquake somewhere, it looks as if Mother Nature would tell us by the means of such rumblings that something quite definitely is wrong. And very much it is as if here and there there is a prophet which will then tell that something is quite definitely on the wrong road and that one has to repent to see, not to let go what continues but to oppose it. And that the only way to oppose it is to develop within oneself something that could be strong enough to counteract either one or the other force: that is, that man finds his proper place again in the world as a result of a balance which would take place within himself.

It is as if we are unable to control the evolutionary and involutionary forces which affect the world as a whole. That then, the only way out is to see what is possible for a microcosmic existence and that the only way by which then a man can understand the conditions as they take place in the outside world is first to study the condition which he is himself affected by the outside world, but then trying to counteract that by means of a development which of course we call "inner life." So that then when there is an outer life and an inner life within a man, it

would be possible to bring involution and evolution back again to a proper place in which they then affecting each other can create a certain place of equilibrium where man could live.

For us, of course, that kind of an idea is not entirely new. But it has to be restated time and time again because otherwise you become so completely involved in the outside world, and you are swayed, dependent entirely how the wind is blowing simply because you have no particular rudder to sail a ship. How does one do this? That is, what is really for oneself the solution?

In the first place, one has to remember that that what one is is the only thing one has. One can at certain times become devoted to the possibility that something else could enter into one and that then the higher forces as indicated by either involution or evolution could be of certain help. But then the question remains: if they exist, why don't they affect us now? One can, of course, philosophically explain it that one doesn't have any eyes anymore; and although that such forces do exist, nothing in me is even aware of the existence and for that reason one says one has to have something within oneself which is able to become aware of such conditions, and then placing it in relation to one's own world within oneself, that then the necessity becomes quite logical that there -- something should be there. And the image of a higher form of living which then can tell if it could be developed sufficiently can tell one what to do and how to reach within oneself that state of equilibrium.

In the first place, one must know where one starts. One must know, of

course, with which one works. One must know one's self, and this self one must know totally. One must know the totality of that one is and one must make sure that that kind of knowledge is assured, that it is certainty, that it is the truth. All this is logical reasoning; it is not given by anyone in particular. It is given for oneself within oneself when one starts to think and becomes serious about how to meet conditions of outer life without losing one's self.

In the second place, if the effect of outer life is such that the person becomes affected and that he has no inner strength to counteract it, it is also quite logical that he must reduce the influence of outer life to a minimum.

This brings up a very definite question of how a person should try to live in the midst of this chaos. He has to become extremely simple. He has to learn to be satisfied with many things, that is, with many things which have no value, to have the strength to tell that they are of no value. He has to learn to be satisfied with simplicity so that the person not necessarily becoming a hermit and withdrawing from the world, that in the world he is less and less affected by the outside forces coming in on him, and stronger within himself to counteract it. But also that he has to understand that what he already is as a result of the influences from the outer world, that within himself he has to reduce his particular demands. Because that is really what we are talking about because we demand much too much for ourselves.

One can consider it, of course, a form of self-centeredness. And as long

as the self-centeredness has not gone over into selfish and egoistic desires, it is acceptable in the world as it is, but it is not acceptable for oneself because it still remains the center concentrated on oneself in which one wants to be what one considers a man to be in relation only to his own world. And that because of this kind of a wish on the part of a man, not considering other people, not considering other forces of life, not considering the conditions of the world as a whole, but only wishing to extract as much as he possibly can from the condition in which he happens to live, that without even stepping on someone else's toes, he must feel that within himself he is really not entitled to it.

That is a very difficult struggle because everything is an indication because of our education. It indicates for one that that one -- what one learned and what one believes in and what one in this world has been taught is that I have to do away with all such influences in order to reach a life of simplicity. The reason for becoming simple is that perhaps at such a time when there are less and less demands placed on the outside of myself -- there is the appearance to other people, the relationships with other people, the occupation with a great deal of little bits of knowledge of certain things that remain superficial that I simply take in because they happen to be there -- it means I have to become discriminative. I have to find out what is really right for me and have the courage then to say no to the things that I know are not right. And that is exactly the problem. What is right for a person?

You see when we talk about Work in a general way, and I ask you to come to Monday in order to settle certain questions for yourself, even the

quantity of people who were there this last Monday doesn't help very much when there are no questions, and only by a few again and again, the same kind of people. And what happens to those who come here on Wednesdays and when we talk about the necessity of Work on oneself, who then apparently don't want to come on Monday or if they do come, don't ask any questions. Why is it?

I will tell you how to ask a question. Something is alive in you that is stirred up by certain thoughts, certain ways by which every once in a while you hear about conditions about that what may be a solution for your own equilibrium, and you start to think and consider within yourself what is the reason that you have not enough interest in asking a question. This has to be very clear first because if a question is asked, you must know why. Because if you don't know why, or even if you just ask a question a little bit, ins blau hinein, without any further definiteness, then why should you even have an answer? Some of the questions are not exact enough and they have to be interpreted then by those who answer, and of course every once in a while it is misunderstood

If I am affected by the conditions of life, and if I am a thinking and feeling person, and if I realize that something must be done in order to give me peace in mind and faith in my heart, then I have to do something about that in order to clarify certain issues, or try to settle certain problems. And that when I am constantly affected in daily life by all the conditions that have to affect me because I happen to live then, and when I do not like the way I react or I don't even like the conditions

and I don't like the fact that they affect me, then there must be something started in yourself that you say, "How can I get out of this?" What will I want to know and how will I then make clear that that is a question for me so that then I want an answer of that?

So that the third reason is after you have formulated a question that -- which becomes much more important for you than eating a piece of bread and jam, and then you ask that question and don't let go until that question is answered. Because it is nonsense when you get an answer that doesn't fit your question and simply because someone else may not have understood your question. If you allow that to go on and at the end say, "Thank you," and you don't mean it, you simply say it out of politeness. Because you must know that when you have a question, you must know when it is answered. That then I think you should insist and say, "That question of mine, I would like an answer to that." All the different rigamarole about Work and all that I ought to do I do know because I'm trying my best to apply it even if in the application I may not reach certain definite results. And maybe it may look every once in a while like certain things that are the same as ordinary life.

I have a question for my own conscience, and that I think I'm entitled to that when I can formulate it well enough that I ought to have an answer, and if I cannot find it, I will go somewhere that I can find an answer. That is the proper attitude in asking questions. But there is one danger: that these questions can only be based on your honest attempts of Work. And for that reason we talk about Work and explaining it and what is the meaning. So that whenever a question is raised, it has to be linked up

already within you with Work as you understand it and if the question of elucidation about Work itself, you make many times the mistake that you talk about daily life, emotional states, events which take place in ordinary life, and you try to attach to it certain values as if they come as a result from Work. And honestly, they have absolutely nothing to do with it. They are just descriptions of a certain event as an experience which are so completely unconscious that it doesn't even smell of any form of objectivity.

That is why I say when you ask a question, it has to come from an honest result which is dictated, as it were, to yourself whenever you say, "I wish to Work on myself." For instance, if you talk about emotional state and you think that you then have some kind of a realization in which perhaps you may believe that there is an 'I'. But the whole concept of the principle of 'I' is definitely linked up with impartiality. Where is your impartiality in such a state of an emotional experience in which you are completely identified with whatever that experience is? Of course, in the first place there is no 'I'. But in the second place, there is not even an attempt on your part to tell that you were trying to be impartial to it. And as a result, the discussions go on very often in the direction of following through on what your experience is so-called in connection with Work. And it is wrong for the rest of the group even to continue with such statements because you already are on the wrong road to start with. And why create the impression that that has anything to do with the results of Work? If one Works, one knows it. There's no question about that because that what is as Work and meant as Work is a very definite attempt which is contrary to anything that is natural.

When I live in an emotional state and I'm affected, it is that nature that still is there constantly, subjectivity giving me an experience and I call it sometimes a higher form of an experience and I think it is a little purer. But where is this 'I' which, so-called, should look and observe that state? Where is the acceptance of the fact of your existence without describing it? Without liking or disliking it?

When a persons says, "The door is slapped in my face," do you think there is any possibility of being impartial? Of course, it's utter nonsense. And it should immediately have been told, "Talk about that what is Work." When you talk about consciousness, what is consciousness for you? Not your ordinary thoughts, not your thoughts which is a little bit improved. Consciousness in our sense of the word is a result of that what is taking place as a mental activity in which there is an objective faculty functioning in a certain way regarding that what I am. And taking that what I am physically as an appearance for the way it is without any description whatsoever so that that what is 'I' becomes completely neutral to what I am. And it is because of that that there is a separation of a different kind of functioning in the mind. And that that what is being observed is 'Me' as I am. With a face slapped in my door, where is 'I'? Where is consciousness?

It will take some time before you start to understand how to ask a question and also how to insist that you will want an answer on it. But it is so necessary that, particularly in the beginning, you are quite clear about what is meant by Work on oneself. You see, we talk Gurdjieffian language. We don't talk interpretation. We don't talk intellectual endeavors and

explanations like Ouspensky loves to do. We don't have personal interpretations like Nicoll very often wants to indicate as if that is Work. We are not talking about the different books written about Gurdjieff and his life and the way he was and the impression that was created on the people who became authors afterwards. We talk about simplicity in Work and we also know that that involves what we call intellectually ABC, and what we call emotionally, presence of the Lord.

When these two things are not understood and you continue to think that you know it, I would suggest to you not to waste your time. Either you become quite serious about the wish, "How do I Work?" and then to check to see, "Have I Worked?" and is that what I experienced a result of Work itself, or is it still a result of that what I wish to see as Work. So this is what is needed, that kind of honesty.

I've said several times, there is absolutely no use to come to Wednesday unless you have a desire to apply this kind of Work, these kind of ideas for yourself in your daily life. Because if you continue in your daily life, the way you feel and the way you think, you will remain identified with everything happening on the outside world and your reactions will simply take over and that what you even would like to have as something that is awake never will be there. Try to be as clear as you can about that because there is no nonsense about Work. It is not just a slipshod superficial kind of an idea that certain things will take place because perhaps maybe you have who knows what? You don't. And if you have, you know it.

When you make an effort to try to put something there, as it were, that can start to function, you have to know that it is functioning. You have to have a result of that kind of functioning. The result of the functioning of an 'I' in your brain is that you have a fact about yourself which is truthful. It gives you knowledge and it is such knowledge that no one can take away the truth of that knowledge. And when it is understood, it is understanding that is given to you. This is intellectual approach, if you like.

I've said several times the critical question is not observation and it is not simultaneity, it is impartiality. Because we live many times with our feelings and whenever that comes in as a like or dislike and a result with an identification with the experience, your impartiality is not there. And when no attempt is made to try to become impartial to that what is observed, Work is not there at all.

The emotional approach is simpler in words and much more difficult to apply because, you see, what is really necessary for that: I am affected by certain conditions I hear, I read about, I see myself as a human being. I have feelings, I have a past, I remember, I think about it once in a while. Every once in a while my feelings come to the foreground. I do remember things with pleasure or with displeasure. I am in my sentimentality connected with that what has happened. And here I am, constantly having feelings and thoughts about that what was the past for me. And I say -- and I say then that this past has made me what I am and I cannot do away with my memory but now I would like something to become present to me. I say it is a question of deepening my life. That is, that what I have

felt in the past was not sufficient to give me sustenance of a certain kind and I want now life, if possible, in it purest form. That is, I would like to have that what represents my life within myself to become free from the bondage, and now I imagine that there is something of that kind surrounding me or around me in some way making itself known that it is there. This is what I call the presence of the Lord. I simply say 'Lord' because by that I mean that that could become for me an image (at?) if first, or perhaps an entity/or perhaps even a certain kind of crystallization which I attribute -- to which I attribute certain qualities which I don't have but I wish I could have them.

I assign to that what I say is the presence of the Lord that what is really Lordly, or what is heavenly, or what is, I say that in certain words, what is not subjective. So it has to be of an objective kind, but I don't describe it because it is a feeling I want to pursue. Still, that feeling has to give me by its presence a certain knowledge because that is what I wish. I want to know what I am in all truth. I want to make sure that that what I am Working with I can count on. Because if it changes day after day, it is not reliable enough.

When one says that I want to build certain things on a rock, on a foundation, I want then permanency because I build for eternity. And it is exactly that that I now wish with all my heart for something to be present to me, but that what is then present has to affect me in a certain way. That Is what I am now, becomes open to that what is the present. Then I face the problem of openness and I say that is why the application of an emotional attempt is much more difficult. How can I be open? Because as

soon as I try to empty myself, as soon as I even make an attempt which in a certain exercise which we call draining or relaxation, that then perhaps physically I am a little emptier. I drain, if I can, taking the thoughts away and not giving attention to them, not feeding them any energy, that I wish my feelings not to bother me and reduce the activity of the feeling also to a minimum. As soon as I let that particular kind of experiment go, I fill myself again with ordinary thoughts and feelings and they come back and they are then reenforced by the wish and I cannot help then to try to describe what I would like. The difficulty is exactly there.

Even if there is the presence of something that I can call God, and it may be a very small, a little bit of a God, sometimes I say a demigod or a semigod, but atleast it has qualities which I don't have and which I desire will come. I start,then,with my mind and as a result of my honest wish to describe what I would like and how my wish should be attached to a certain result, and I tell this little God, "It ought to be this way and it ought to be that way because that is the way I think I ought to grow."

The difficulty in an emotional approach is that I remain identified with my wish and the result of the wish and I try to describe it. And that kind of a result is not acceptable to a God, if He is that. And for that God, then, to become impartial to me is extremely difficult when I tell Him what I think He ought to do. The result is quite obvious; He simply leaves me, because He will say, "There is no use talking to you, you are not open." How can I lose myself sufficiently? How can I remain in

existence and not have anything else interfere with my existence? How can I actually become empty, ready to be filled, and not allow my thoughts or my feelings to interfere in some way or other? How can I make this kind of a control so that I can then remain empty in the presence of that what I hope can help me? This you might say is like a prayer that I then will devote all the energy I have to remain open to that what might come. But also it means that that what would come, if it does come, I have to accept it for whatever it is and I should not have any thoughts or any feelings. I should,again,not have any judgments about what the Lord is then sending me or with which the Lord wants to fill me. And that, I say, is the greatest difficulty of an emotional approach.

You see, I cannot formulate it. I go then by feelings. And I know that certain things are not right when they are mixed and when I say, "I wish to lose myself and here I am, God; you tell me now, " -- as soon as I say it, the thought comes already, "I hope he won't tell me that I shouldn't be dishonest. I hope He will not tell me that I shouldn't be conceited. I hope that He won't see how I love myself. I hope He wants -- He wants to see me, but rather not see how irresponsible my life is." Maybe I can get away with it so that I hope that God really is a little bit blind so that he won't really see everything. And I say, "I don't believe in the end that He has an all-seeing eye."

You see, the difficulty of that kind of reasoning, of course, destroys completely an emotional approach. And then many times wishing then to have some kind of a semblance of Work, I continue with this emotional state and I start to describe that what is taking place in my life in an ordinary sense. And I hope, and it is a hope that is quite honest, that that what

takes place as an emotional state is a result of Work and, I must say, "It doesn't touch Work at all." It just happens to be you, unconsciously and even unconscientiously. It is an ordinary person in a good state. You know what is happening when there is something of a higher nature present to you. You become very small, you don't really want to talk. You're afraid when something of that kind is there that the least amount of disturbance might make it go away. You walk, as it were, tenderly, on tip-toes. You don't make too much noise. You don't want to believe in your emotions because you know that already that they may lead you astray and that that what is present to you, which first you hoped would be in the image of God, turns out to be the image of the devil, which because of a deepened emotion you start to worship. This is really one of the most difficult things to accept. And in the beginning it is difficult to know what to do regarding Work.

But that is the reason that we have to talk about Work all the time. That is the reason you have to be reminded of the simplicity of the application of certain fundamental truths. You have to understand that all the time that what is an experience and which you like to explain has to be questioned. And that the only way by which you can question it is to do away with all explanations and to see if at that time you honestly can start again. Because you know that when you have started to explain it, you're unconscious. In your conscious state, if that exists, you will not talk. Your conscious state, if it is a state of deep emotion which is conscientious, you will keep your mouth shut. You will not wish to disturb what is there. You are very careful and you treat whatever that state is of yourself with such delicacy because you know you are in the

presence of something that is entirely different from your ordinary life and that you don't wish to explain things. If you do and when you do and very soon even after you might have had a result which looks a little bit as if it could become objective, then proves to yourself that it was objective, prove then that then when you say, "I again have a wish, something for me to exist as 'I'." I now create that. It is the result of a state in which I am affected and which may be fulfilled with emotion. And I question even the validity of that emotion actually being in contact with an 'I'. I prove it by being able to use such energy again and again for the creation of an 'I' in accordance with ordinary words which I then know and -- and then start to spply. This is the way I remain honest, and this is the way I can remain serious. But don't overdo this kind of an intellectual endeavor. Don't keep on explaining to yourself. Don't keep on thinking that you have to have a great deal of information before you even can continue to Work. At any one time after any kind of experience, the thought can come that the proof of the pudding will be the eating of your energy. That then you must prove to yourself that something has happened which then will enable you to create it again. And if you cannot honestly create it, you must come to the conclusion that there was no Work involved at all. That of course is an obvious statement. The only way by which you can learn how to Work is to select times when there is nothing else involved than just a little manifestation of your life. That even if there are habitual ways of movement, even if then the thought is not there, that you must select the simplicity of an outside condition in order to meet the simplicity of your inner life when you wish to start to Work on yourself. For a long time, don't try it during the day unless

you can create such conditions in that day in your professional work when that is not professional work anymore for two or three moments or minutes. When during the day you have the thought, don't do it as yet when you're involved in a telephone conversation or when things are much too difficult. When you're in the subway and someone pushes you, or that you have to run for the train and just get into the door, that's not the time for this kind of Work at all.

The time for this kind of Work is when you get up. The time for simplicity is when everything is still simple. It is a time when your mind is not as yet -- is not engaged in ordinary thoughts of the day, of planning of what you're going to do. It is a time when you still can do simple things in a simple way without the presence of other people around you, because they will affect you. You will react towards them and that you will go in that direction. You will be lost because you cannot hold on to something and at the same time keep on with the rest. That is, you have -- learn in the beginning to divide your energy in such a way that most of that will go into the wish to Work on yourself and that very little can go in the maintenance of yourself. At most, you keep on breathing, that's about all. So that, then, whatever is left of an energy which has to be used for the wish, the fulfillment of the wish to actually create something unusual, that then you have, perhaps, a chance for an experience. Only at such times, in the beginning.

Even if a task is mentioned that you should do it on the hour, or three times a day, or whenever you can, you already run a risk. Why not start today? If during the day you can make it so as if it is the beginning of a day without any particular thought? But you know how difficult it is

during the day when you are in ordinary life, even if you say, "I don't want to think about this and that, " it continues for a little while even if you sit quiet. For instance, you sit at a desk, and you have been writing, and you have a pen in your hand, or a ball pen, and you say, "Now I wish to Work." You put the ball pen down, you sit quiet for a moment. The thoughts were with what you were doing, writing a report, making a drawing. Your eyes are still open. You look; maybe there are other people in the room. Maybe you resist a little bit in order to make it a little more comfortable. Your thoughts continue for a little while. It is the result of a momentum which has taken place in an unconscious state and has to work itself out. You take some deep breaths, if you can, to try to come to yourself, and then you say, "Let there be an 'I' . You keep on sitting, not making a movement at that time, not picking up your pencil, not allowing the thought that the pencil has to be used again a little later, or the thought that you are taking time off which should be spent in some other way, or whatever other obligation you feel you have.

Completely by yourself. Sometimes one stands for five minutes. You can not keep it out, you know it. Almost within half a second, you have lost already the possibility of an awareness and 'I' is not there there. You're trying. Close your eyes, try to remain aware of your body just sitting. Move your hand a little to see if that what is 'I' can remain. But you know when there is an order given by your brain to move your hand, there goes your energy in that direction. It is an unconscious state, and an unconscious movement. But your wish of 'I', if it could be there, to become aware of you, this body, moving a hand, picking up a pencil, still sitting, perhaps breathing. But again such physiological ideas of oneself are extremely difficult because you cannot get rid from your partiality regarding

them. Forget them for a little while. Get up from your chair. Stand up. Sit down. Walk around the desk. Sit down again. All the time hold on to something that you can consider, perhaps it is 'I', perhaps it isn't as yet, for surely it is not full grown. But you must make such attempt in such simple circumstances.

If in the morning when you wake up when you have rested enough and you're honest and sincere about the desire of Work for the day, if really you feel that there is a need for spending time, then try to consider the possibility of further growth in the direction of objectivity. If you're honest about that what you are, realizing that that what you wish is a necessity since that which you are is not as yet full grown enough, that there is in you dissatisfaction, that you feel that something ought to be done by you, you can even say, "By the grace of God that I have the thought that I wish to Work on myself." But we talk about such things; they are in the light of something else that does not belong to ordinary life. But now I take off fifteen minutes in the beginning after I get out of bed. Sometimes I've said, "Sit on the edge, it doesn't matter." Do certain things that remain conducive for the production of a certain state which is different from ordinary life, which takes you away from your ordinary life and makes you concentrate on something else that you can say, "It has a deeper value." Maybe look at a picture of Gurdjieff, if Gurdjieff has any meaning. Read ten pages of ALL AND EVERYTHING if you actually can give it that attention. If you just wish to sit quiet and relax and reduce your thoughts to a minimum and see if during that time there may be moments of an awareness of yourself sitting on the bed or on a chair. Listen to some music that might give you at such a time the possibility of relaxation within your

emotional center without trying to translate it into an intellectual endeavor of seeing the notes and seeing how the structure of the music is, or listening too much to a melody which may be repeated in different scales. See if at such a time you actually can come to yourself, as we say.

But that what is yourself must be your real self and not your ordinary one because that's already there. Yourself means that which is the essential quality. Yourself is that what is the beginning of your inner life. Trying to reconstruct your inner life in accordance with what was the reality of yourself when you were young. That is, your inner life becomes interested in giving room to the genuineness of that what you actually are within yourself. Sometimes one says, "That self is 'Me'. As God could give me life so this self has life in accordance with the law of God." Maybe you can-- maybe your conditions are not so helpful early in the morning. Maybe you are already disturbed. Maybe you have children to attend to. Take it a little later. Maybe you have put the coffee on and you also attend to that because otherwise it boils over. Don't put the coffee on. Wait! Don't allow telephone calls to interfere. Don't let thoughts of the day interfere. Just try to put yourself on a certain plateau of essentiality that's unchallenging.

That will help you for the rest of the day because it's bound to go down. You know that since the outside world attracts you, after a little while you are one with the outside world, on a certain level very close to the surface of the Earth. You try to do the experiment that I now wish to make is to see how can I for a certain length of time retain a level, a

level a little away from the Earth, perhaps a level which I can compare to the possibility of an emotional state free from an expression through my body. Actually, that the emotional state is understood this time without having to express it by means of a manifestation of that what I am usually doing. If I can make this plateau extend, then it will go down again and again because I cannot maintain in the beginning these kind of efforts. But I don't have enough energy for it, and I don't have enough wish. And I don't have lost my self-love sufficiently.

You see, one starts with Work with honesty. One must try to understand that Work has that meaning for oneself. If I talk about an emotional body of Kesdjania, or that what is the building of one's soul, we don't talk about chickens. We talk about something so fundamental in one's life that it really cannot be compared to anything with which I'm familiar in ordinary existence. I talk about unusual experiences. When one talks about heaven on Earth, that is a different thing from the increased possibility of subjectivity on Earth. It is the introduction of something that is so unusual I have to call objective. How can I loosen myself from the grip of my subjectivity? How can I continue in my ordinary life and gradually build up, taking from ordinary life energies which are there because I react and then having a wish within myself of conversion, using such energy for a different purpose without doing any harm to myself? One thing, it has to be so clear to you. In the beginning there was only a word without content. As soon as I start to think that there is already content regarding the principles of objectivity, the word has no more meaning, and can as well be put somewhere else never to be touched.

When one looks at this kind of Work as if,and actually wishes to believe it,

that one knows already what is meant by it, you are a fool. There is nothing in this kind of Work that you know. You have to learn. There is absolutely nothing that has any resemblance to an objective faculty. There have been states in one's life in which there was an objective observation, the realization of something in which all the forms of ordinary life,as manifestations,had dropped away. But that you might say was accidental, or you can say it was an act of God. Don't be so presumptuous that you think that your mind already knows, but it has been reading a little bit of religion here and there, and that perhaps you have tried to dabble with an idea of moment in Zen, or that you have been feeding yourself in your mind too much with all kind of literature, every once in a while,esoteric.

You don't know what it means when it is applied in your daily life. Because as soon as you try, you find out that you don't know. But for that you have to be quite honest. Because you must know that any attempt you make can last only a moment, and then your ordinary brain will take over and there is a thought and you don't know when it stops. You see, this is the interesting thing. I wish, I make up my mind. I create. That is, I can come to a point when I say, "I wish to make an effort." It is as if at that point in my life something is erected in the direction of God. It is a vertical something giving me at a certain moment a plateau where I then am, an experience for one moment the existence of objectivity. I cannot maintain it even if I try, but I try to maintain it and I go over, enforcing it, instead of remaining open because I don't know what it means. And as a result, in trying to make that kind of an effort, in wanting to maintain it, it goes down from the highest point I've reached and it reaches

the Earth. And then I come to the conclusion that I have been asleep, and I do not know when I fell asleep. It is that kind of a figure, if you understand it, a line rising above the level of the Earth, coming up to a certain point and then in the continuation of time describing it a little bit, partly a circle, partly diagonal, partly already sagging like a parabola, and then finally reaching the Earth at a certain point in which there is no further doubt that you've lost all consciousness. That is,your ordinary mental functioning, our unconscious state, tells you that you are asleep. It is at that time, I can Work again. And again I erect that kind of a line as high as I can make, dependent on the depth of my wish. And again I reach a point and it is a moment of realization of my 'amness' and the acceptance of myself as I then am and again the same process. I lose track where I actually lose it because there is no indication that I go down because I cover it up with my thoughts. Because I wish and my thought, my wish goes over into the thought which is not anymore connected with actuality of the experience of objectivity.

This is what I mean by honesty for yourself. When you honestly try, you sit. You want to speak. You say certain things. No one is there; no one hears you. You formulate a few words, even you can say, certain letters. Maybe you can count. You say it slowly. What can become aware; something can be aware of the movement of your lips, your tongue. How they are joined. How the wind goes through it. How it comes from your vocal cords, knowing that that is the way a tone or a voice is produced. I can continue to use certain words without meaning so that the meaning, when it has dropped away, may not interfere anymore with my mind, that I recognized the words. I can keep on breathing and make my breathing vocal so that it

it is like a sound. I can hear it. I can continue to become aware of a body breathing and creating a sound and then that body sitting. My 'I' can become aware of that fact. There is no description. There is no wish to intellectualize about it. I just accept the fact of breathing in an ordinary normal way and keeping on, and something in me is aware of this body breathing. I walk. My body is walking. Something can be aware of the movement of legs, of the posture, maybe carrying, whatever it may be. I walk. I stand still. Something can be aware of myself as a body standing. I shrug my shoulder. Something is aware of the movement of my shoulder. I bend my head up, down, left, right. I wish my 'I' to be observant of the fact that my head, I would almost say, a head, is moving. I close my eyes. The eyelids close my eyes. I open them. I do it again. I open them. Something is aware of the movements of my eyelid. I have nothing to like or dislike. It is a movement only. It is something which expresses aliveness of myself. In that way my 'I' becomes aware of the aliveness as a result of the moving and makes, you might say, that, an observation and registers the fact of my eyelids existing. And it continues, that the eyelids are moving. This is how I piece together; if that what is an awareness can remain as a state of awakening on the part of 'I', it could become a little more continuous story of the existence of myself. And life existing within me being recognized by the liveness of 'I' itself. This is how I start. This is the consideration. This is why I want to Work, to find out by means of this very simple method apparently having nothing to do with my brain and my philosophy, nothing to do with my religious feeling. That's why I hate it, because I don't believe in such simplicity. I wish already that I say, "I, this me here, I consider conscientious; I already am a

man. What is this nonsense of Gurdjieff telling me that I am not as yet what I am already? I can prove it to you because look at my deep feelings I have. Look at the art I produce. Look how clever I am. Look at my brain. Look at the thoughts that appear there. See how logically they are connected. You see, I am somebody. I am not the tail of a donkey. Why bother me with little bits of things that belong to a child?" That is exactly where they become and until I become like a child, I will not enter into the kingdom of heaven. This is one of the big things that one has to start to accept instead of describing what happens to you during the day and that a neighbor, etc., etc. Why in God's name has that anything to do with Work? When you wish to talk about Work, x start with the simplicity of Work. And prove then that you understand the principles on which it is based. Then an answer can be given and that there is no philosophy, no intellectualization, no rationalizations at all. Not even explanations are necessary, that only in simply saying, "Yes, that is right. Yes, that is the right road. No, you're wrong. Do it this way; do it that way," that's the question and answer.

There was a time when Orage was here, and Orage of course coming from Gurdjieff who at that time was in France. This was after 1924 when he had been here for the first time. And Orage came back and started groups in '24, and there was several of us, of course, who followed him and naturally were interested and became more and more interested. Because Orage was that kind of a person who could communicate and, having a brilliant mind, could formulate. And we adored him because really there was something in him that was not only appealing but actually giving us food. And then for certain reasons, his intellect got the better of

him and there was then constantly explanations, more or less, and gradually growing a little bit outside of principles, forgetting every once in a while a principle because it was so beautiful to intellectualize and to place certain things in relation to philosophy or religion, and quite cleverly, interested in psychology of a certain kind, descriptions of certain states. And we loved it because it satisfied our minds and every once in a while we were quite forgetful about Work. And then all of a sudden Gurdjieff comes and visits. And he comes to the group and Orage, as a good pupil, sits with us. And Gurdjieff looks at the group, and I must say, quite intelligent people, not just anybody, people with a little name eve. "Intelligentsia, " we call them sometimes. And he looks at us. And he says, "On the forehead of every one of you I see certain signs, and it means for me that you are a candidate for the madhouse." Too much intellectualization, too much philosophy, too many explanations will make you a fool. Regarding this kind of Work, it is a symbol of brain as a symbol of heart which will reach a certain height which you will not reach as long as you keep on philosophizing with your mind. What is needed is perspective. For then it is right to know where things are placed so that you can then recognize them for whatever they are worth, but as always from the standpoint, "Where do I begin with Work?" And always it ends up with a prayer of Work on yourself. Whenever you start with Work, if you call it that way, and you make an attempt, then when that attempt is perhaps successful, perhaps you don't even know it's successful, but at least it made an attempt. You have done your best and you keep on then thinking about this and that and the other and maybe e even you read ALL AND EVERYTHING, always end such a session again with an attempt to Work on yourself. Never forget the

principles of Work. They are completely interwoven in this philosophy and if one does not adhere to that, "the philosophy" will make you mad.

In relation to the wish to be alive, philosophy will kill you. And I honestly mean this. Because the dangers are constantly on the way that you want to use whatever there is of your ordinary existence and experiences you've had, and you want to pawn them off as something that is already Work. It is not Work, and don't think it. When you talk about harmonious man, you have absolutely no idea what is meant of harmony of that kind. Don't talk about it. Don't even talk about consciousness, let alone conscience. You don't know about it. You're just starting, very few steps on the road, to wish that something could become conscious in you. Ninety-nine percent is still unconscious. And time and time again when you make an attempt to wake up, you will realize that that is the case, when you're honest. The road to consciousness and conscientiousness is extremely difficult, because you have to Work away with all the kinds of things that you are not familiar with, with the things that are constantly in your way and which tell you that they are almost like a substitute that you can take because it's just as good as Work on yourself. All the interpretations of the doctrine of Gurdjieff are mixed-mix. There's only one thing. That is, "What is Work when I wish to wake up and create an 'I' which is then awake and where the rest of me remains asleep, but it can be under an observation of that what is awake?"

Try to understand what is the meaningness of this what I am now saying. That is the foundation for Work on yourself and each person can make attempts of that kind, and when you want to talk about it, that has to be

in your question. Otherwise, don't. Otherwise, simply say, "How can I Work? Please explain it to me again time and time; if I can Work, if I can understand it, I will do my best, I will make an attempt. I can sit on the bed. I can let my pencil rest for a little while. I can stand in a corner and turn around slowly. I can stand in front of the window and become aware of myself with my hands on the window sill. I can do a few things, I know in simplicity. I can lift the weight from the floor. I can put it down again. I can stand straight. I can bend over and touch my toes with my outstretched fingers. I can straighten out again. I can move my arms, left, right, up, forward, down. All the time I wish, I ask God to help me to create 'I' for me, my 'I' -- my 'I' aware of me, poor me, unconscious me, but observing an awareness of me, the realization of my existence as I am, moving my arm, left, right, forward, up. One arm, the other." You see, that is Work. When you want to be honest about your Work, that simplicity is required. No philosophy, no kind of thinking of interpretation of what you have read. Forget it. Read ALL AND EVERYTHING; take in what you can. Forget about the rest. Don't think that you will be able to understand it at first reading, at second reading, not even at the third reading. It will be a long, long time before you can understand THE ARCH-ABSURD. You cannot understand Impartial Mentation. You have no idea of what Gurdjieff means when he has Mullah Nasser Eddin say certain things about which you laugh and you say, "It's so clever."

We talk about seriousness in one's life and the necessity of building something which is surely not right and only in a little embryonic form which we call inner life, and a hope that that inner life could grow

by remaining simple in this world of conflict and this tremendous chaotic condition of the outside world which affects me. And I cannot help it because I was born here and I constantly am reminded because I have a body; I have to feel it, I have to take care of it. I have to have something that I call feeling in order to give a little bit of balance to myself. And of course I have a little mind also which has to be exercised. That's me. If I say "slug", I won't believe it at all. And still there is something in me that compels me at times that something must be done, and that kind of little part of my conscience reminds me, that what is magnetic center reminds me. It says, "As life, please do everything to set me free. I don't want to stay here and go through the same thing again in another body. Try to find ways and means to create some helper from the outside who knows the combination of the lock, that when he can come, he can put a key in the lock of my prison so that then ~~elrt~~ that 'I' can open the door and let me out." That what speaks is a Sleeping Beauty to be awakened by Prince Charming. If one could look at one's life in that way that all of us have that as a potentiality and that there is a sincere wish at least every once in a while that you can come to yourself when you sit in your inner, inner chamber. And there is nothing at that moment to worry about because you don't wish to think or to feel, that maybe at such a time the Lord God can hear your conscience crying out to be set free from this bondage of this damnable Earth in which we happen to live at the present time.

Goodnight.

End Tape

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